

Country information guide for migrants

The main objective of this guide, developed by UGAIN project partners, is to provide the manager of an intercultural garden, NGOs, associations, and anyone who is interested, with existing resources for the attention of the collective population of immigrants who come to our countries in search of new opportunities, trying to promote their full integration into society.

European citizens face a never before seen migration challenge of unheard of dimensions and complexity, so this manual is intended to serve as a reference when facilitating the social integration of these individuals. In many cases, ignorance of the existing resource portfolio causes us to miss opportunities in guiding and assisting the population of immigrants, who, especially at the beginning of their migration journey, need guidance focused on solving their problems.

We have divided the manual into seven parts with an appendix, each section responding to the specific and general needs of daily life in Europe, with the corresponding resources available. Due to the wide variety and complexity of the cases to be dealt with, each partner of the UGAIN project has developed the guide according to the regulations and characteristics of the host country, following a common pattern to be able to offer a complete and useful manual, which has not been created with the intention of being exhaustive or solving all the doubts that may arise within an interculture garden, but offering general and reference information where we can support the professionals of the sector in case of need.

Finally, emphasizing the hope in which this guide is derived, the result of years of work by the participating partners, with strong social character and in the hope of supporting those dreams that often stay along the way, so that one day they can become reality.

Links presented below are updated until the end date of the UGAIN project (May 2020). If the address is no longer active, please refer to the organisation responsible for the page described at the beginning of each link.



1. GENERAL INFORMATION

All over the UK there are fantastic organisations, often small charities, providing vital support to people seeking a new life in the UK. This might include drop-ins, housing advice, legal advice, integration projects, food banks and many others. Partnering with a refugee organisation can be crucial to making connections with people seeking support and for ongoing advice and support for your project. Some growing spaces offer dedicated sessions for migrants, usually in partnership with a refugee organisation, whilst others invite migrants to attend regular sessions or just to drop in. This handbook highlights the various organisations and support information which you may find useful to support migrants coming to your garden.

1. General information about UK refugees and asylum seekers:

You must apply for asylum if you want to stay in the UK as a refugee. The definition of an asylum seeker is someone who has arrived in a country and asked for asylum. Until they receive a decision as to whether they are a refugee, they are known as an asylum seeker. In the UK, this means they do not have the same rights as a refugee, or a British citizen would.

To be eligible you must have left your country and be unable to go back because you fear persecution.

You can apply for a visa if you want to come to the UK for another reason (for example to work, study or remain with family). If you're already in the UK and want to remain with family living here, apply for a family of a settled person visa. You should apply when you arrive in the UK or as soon as you think it would be unsafe for you to return to your own country. Your application is more likely to be denied if you wait.

After you apply you'll have a meeting with an immigration officer (known as a 'screening') and then an asylum interview with a caseworker. You will usually get a decision on your application within 6 months. You can get up to 2 years in prison or must leave the UK if you give false information on your application.

You'll be told after your screening what you must do while you're waiting for your asylum decision, for example report to a caseworker regularly (known as 'reporting meetings'). You must tell the authorities if your situation changes. You will not usually be allowed to work while your asylum claim is being considered.

Housing is provided, but asylum-seekers cannot choose where it is, and it is often 'hard to let' properties which Council tenants do not want to live in. Cash support is available, and is currently set at £37.75 per person, per week, which makes it £5.39 a day for food, sanitation and clothing.

When a person is given refugee status, they have just 28 days to find accommodation and apply for mainstream benefits before they are evicted from asylum accommodation. Many refugees become homeless at this stage.

For further information about claiming asylum in the UK please go to:

- <https://www.gov.uk/claim-asylum>

Links referring to general information about different legal status of migrants:

- **The UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) has detailed information and statistics on asylum in the UK at:** <http://www.unhcr.org/uk/asylum-in-the-uk.html>
- **The City of Sanctuary resources section has a wide range of information, tools and templates available at:** <https://cityofsanctuary.org/resources>
- **The Refugee Council publishes regular briefings on UK asylum statistics at:** <https://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/stats>
- **Asylum Aid has published a guide to the asylum process at:** <https://www.asylumaid.org.uk/the-asylumprocess-made-simple/>
- **Citizens Advice service's work involves providing advice on issues such as debt management and welfare benefits, housing, immigration and asylum, Go to:** <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/immigration/asylum-and-refugees/after-you-get-refugee-status/>
- **If you are a refugee, asylum seeker or vulnerable migrant, the British Red Cross may be able to help you:** <https://www.redcross.org.uk/get-help/get-help-as-a-refugee>

Citizenship

- **Expatica have a website dedicated to living in the Uk. To understand how to get a British passport, take the UK citizenship test and more by going to** <https://www.expatica.com/uk/moving/citizenship/british-citizenship-applying-for-a-british-passport-in-the-uk-1028671/>

Driving license

- **Gov.UK helps you find government services and information. To obtain a new drivers license go to:** <https://www.gov.uk/apply-for-your-full-driving-licence>
- **Getting a license if you already have one from another country:** <https://www.internations.org/go/moving-to-the-uk/country-facts/getting-a-uk-driving-license>



2. HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

Mental Health

Many refugees and asylum seekers share a history of multiple traumas which may display in many different ways and whilst in some people it might not be immediately obvious, it is important to be aware of some of the signs of stress and to have a clear process if you need to support someone.

There is further information about this in the City of Sanctuary Mental Health Resource Pack which can be found here:

- <https://health.cityofsanctuary.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/47/2017/12/CoS-Mental-Health-Resource-Pack-digital.pdf>

General access to the NHS for migrants

- **Gov.UK helps you find government services and information:**

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/nhs-entitlements-migrant-health-guide>

And

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/guidance-on-providing-nhs-treatment-for-asylum-seekers-and-refugees>

- **In Scotland you can find further information at NHSinform.scot:** <https://www.nhsinform.scot/care-support-and-rights/health-rights/access/healthcare-for-refugees-and-asylum-seekers-and-overseas-visitors>

Maternity care

- **Maternity Action highlights maternity rights in the UK:** <https://maternityaction.org.uk/advice/asylum-seekers-and-article-3-claimants-entitlement-to-nhs-maternity-care/>

General social care

- **The Social Care Institute for Excellence highlights good practice for migrants:** <https://www.scie.org.uk/publications/guides/guide37-good-practice-in-social-care-with-refugees-and-asylum-seekers/background/legislation.asp>

Care needs

- **The Home Office offers advice on asylum seekers with care needs:** https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/731907/Asylum-Seekers-With-Care-Needs-v2.0ext.pdf



3. WORKING

Those who claim asylum in the UK are not normally allowed to work whilst their claim is being considered. They are provided with accommodation and support to meet their essential living needs if they would otherwise be destitute. The Home Office may grant permission to work in accordance with this policy to asylum seekers whose claim has been outstanding for more than 12 months through no fault of their own. Those who are allowed to work are restricted to jobs on the shortage occupation list published by the Home Office.

Those who are granted leave have unrestricted access to the labour market. Asylum seekers are encouraged to volunteer whilst their claim is being considered. Volunteering involves spending time, unpaid, doing something that aims to benefit the environment or someone (individuals or groups). By volunteering for a charity or public sector organisation, asylum seekers can support their local community, and this will also assist with their integration if they are granted leave to remain in the UK

The Home Office offers advice on working:

- https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/803596/permission-to-work-v8.0-ext.pdf

Volunteering

- **Refugee Action offers advice on volunteering if you are an asylum seeker:** <https://www.refugee-action.org.uk/giving-asylum-seekers-right-volunteer/>
- **WWW.GOV.UK offers information about volunteering:** <https://www.gov.uk/government/get-involved/take-part/volunteer>
- **The National Council for Volunteering Organisations offers support for people that want to volunteer:** <https://www.ncvo.org.uk/ncvo-volunteering/i-want-to-volunteer>
- **Volunteering Matters encourages volunteering in the UK and has information about volunteering opportunities:** <https://volunteeringmatters.org.uk/>

Training opportunities

The Refugee Council works directly with thousands of refugees each year. They provide crisis advice and practical support, help people to integrate into their new communities and offer mental health counselling to help them come to terms with the trauma so many of them have experienced.

They are the only national organisation providing support to refugee children and young people who arrive in the UK alone.

- **The Refugee Council offer relevant, practical and up-to-date training for people working with asylum seekers and refugees in the UK:** <https://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/latest/training-events/>



4. EDUCATION

Information about Education for refugee and asylum-seeking children:

- **Unicef helps build a world where the rights of every child are recognised. They have information on education for refugee and asylum seeking children:** <https://www.unicef.org.uk/publications/access-to-education-refugee-asylum-seeking-children/>
- **The National Association For Language Development In The Curriculum gives information on teaching and learning for refugees:** <https://www.naldic.org.uk/eal-teaching-and-learning/outline-guidance/ealrefugee/>
- **The Childrens Society offers a toolkit for carers and information about education and schools:** <https://www.childrensociety.org.uk/youngcarer/refugee-toolkit/education-and-school>
- **Some universities and higher education colleges consider asylum seekers to be international students who must pay overseas fees. However, asylum seekers can't usually get student support until the Home Office has made a decision on their application.**
- **Information from Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) about finance for refugees and asylum seekers at universities in the UK:** <https://www.ucas.com/finance/additional-funding/student-finance-refugees-and-asylum-seekers>
- **Refugee Study offers information about scholarships, grants and free courses for refugees, asylum seekers and migrants:** <http://www.refugee-study.co.uk/>



5. FINANCIAL AID AND OTHER SERVICES INCLUDING HOUSING

People seeking asylum in the UK are excluded from claiming mainstream welfare benefits and in most cases from working. Section 95 support is aimed at asylum seekers whose claims are ongoing, who are destitute or about to become destitute, and their dependents.

Asylum Support Appeals Project has easy to use factsheets for anyone with questions about asylum support:

- <https://www.asaproject.org/uploads/Factsheet-1-section-95.pdf>

Information from Local Authorities on housing for refugees and asylum seekers:

- <https://www.local.gov.uk/topics/communities/refugees-and-asylum-seekers/refugees-and-unaccompanied-children>

Housing

- **The Children's Society can help young carers from refugee families who face severe and multiple disadvantage regarding housing:** <https://www.childrensociety.org.uk/youngcarer/refugee-toolkit/accessing-accommodation>

- **The Asylum Information Data base (AIDA) is a database managed by the European Council on Refugees and Exiles containing information on asylum procedures, reception conditions across 23 countries. This report gives information about reception conditions and housing of refugees and asylum seekers:** <http://www.asylumineurope.org/reports/country/united-kingdom/reception-conditions/housing/types-accommodation>
- **UK Government guide for asylum seekers staying in temporary accommodation while their claim to asylum is assessed:** <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-asylum-accommodation-contracts-awarded>
- **The Chartered Institute of Housing offers housing rights information in England and Wales:** <https://www.housing-rights.info/obtaining-council-housing.php>
- **In Scotland the Scottish Refugee Council has issued a guide for housing professionals working with refugees and asylum seekers:** http://www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk/assets/0001/1240/Housing_Practitioners_Guide_to_Integrating_Asylum_Seekers__Refugees.pdf



6. INFORMATION FOR VICTIMS OF ABUSE AND DISCRIMINATION

Migrant, refugee and asylum seeking women and girls are a diverse group as regards nationality, age, legal and social status, professional and personal situation and characteristics, as well as the reasons why they leave their countries of origin. There are a number of organisations set up to support women and girls in the UK.

Abuse/violence against women

- **Citizens Advice gives people the knowledge and confidence they need to find their way forward- whoever they are, and whatever their problem. In this link they give information on domestic violence and abuse:** <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/family/gender-violence/domestic-violence-and-abuse-organisations-which-give-information-and-advice/>
- **The Rights of Women help women through the law. They supply information about help women can get with domestic violence:** <https://rightsofwomen.org.uk/further-help/>
- **The Council of Europe Gender Equality has issued a strategy and the need for better gender sensitive migration and asylum policies:** <https://rm.coe.int/prems-089319-gbr-2573-protecting-the-rights-of-migrant-refugee-and-asy/168096608a>
- **Refuge is for women and children and is against domestic violence. They believe no one should live in fear of violence or abuse and give support to clients to help them rebuild their lives:** <https://www.refuge.org.uk/>
- **Southall Black Sisters are a group of black and minority women with years of experience of struggling for women's human rights in the UK. They offer specialist advice and provide advocacy and resource centre in West London:** <https://southallblacksisters.org.uk/need-help/immigration-problems-abusive-relationships/>
- **In Scotland the Scottish Refugee Council offers help for women who need support with domestic violence:** http://www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk/how_we_can_help/i_am_a_woman/violence_and_abuse_getting_help

Racism and discrimination

- **Citizen Advice gives support on discrimination because of race or religion:** <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/law-and-courts/discrimination/discrimination-because-of-race-religion-or-belief/discrimination-because-of-race/>
- **The National Assembly Against Racism try and end racism and gives further information on how to cope with this problem:** <http://www.naar.org.uk/>



7. OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION

- **The City of Sanctuary resources section has a wide range of information, tools and templates available at:** <https://cityofsanctuary.org/resources/>
- **Refugee Week happens every year in June and there are lots of resources and ideas at:** <http://refugeeweek.org.uk/resources/>
- **Amnesty International run a free online course called Human Rights: The Rights of Refugees at:** <https://www.edx.org/course/human-rightsthe-rights-of-refugees-0>



APPENDIX FOR THE GARDEN MANAGER

Social Farms & Gardens is a UK wide charity supporting communities to farm, garden and grow together.

Our vision - people and communities reaching their full potential through nature-based activities as a part of everyday life.

Our mission - to improve the health and wellbeing of individuals, communities and the environment through nature-based activities.

- <https://www.farmgarden.org.uk/>

Gardens of Sanctuary

For many people arriving to seek asylum in the UK, community growing spaces can offer vital and unique opportunities to find community, improve mental and physical health and to learn and share skills. These resources have been designed to encourage and support community growing groups to welcome people seeking sanctuary.

Social Farms & Gardens and City of Sanctuary are working together to support and inspire some of the thousands of community growing spaces in the UK to become places of sanctuary for people forced to flee from persecution.

- <https://www.farmgarden.org.uk/sites/farmgarden.org.uk/files/gardens-of-sanctuary-resource-pack-portrait.pdf>
- <https://gardens.cityofsanctuary.org/case-studies>
- <https://www.farmgarden.org.uk/sites/farmgarden.org.uk/files/gos-report-final.pdf>

Partners

Technical
University
of Munich



Technical University
of Munich
(Germany)
www.tum.de



anstiftung
(Germany)
www.anstiftung.de



On Projects Advising SL
(Spain)
www.onprojects.es



Asociación Cantabria Acoge
(Spain)
www.cantabriaacoge.com



Folkuniversitetet
(Sweden)
www.folkuniversitetet.se



Social Farms & Gardens
(UK)
www.farmgarden.org.uk



GärtnerInnen der Welt kooperieren

Gartenpolylog
(Austria)
www.gartenpolylog.org

Social Media



/UGAIN.EU
<https://www.facebook.com/UGAIN.EU/>



/UGAIN_ERASMUS
https://twitter.com/UGAIN_ERASMUS

Project Website

www.ugain.online



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

UGAIN: Urban GARDens for the social INtegration of migrants
Project Number: 2017-1-DE02-KA204-004151